A SHORT

ACCOUNT

OF THE

DEATH

OF

Mary Langſon,

Of TAXALL, in *CHESHIRE*;

Who died *January* the 29th, 1769.

Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my ſoul. Pſalm lxvi, 17.

O death, where is thy ſting? O grave where is thy victory? The ſting of death is ſin; and the ſtrength of ſin is the law. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. 1 Cor. xv, 55, 56, 57.

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A

SHORT ACCOUNT, &c.

WHEN *Mary Langſon* was about fourteen years of age, it pleaſed God to awaken her by the preaching of the goſpel; and ſoon after, ſhe received a clear ſenſe of his pardoning love, in the enjoyment of which ſhe continued, though not exempted from thoſe trials and temptations which are common to believers.—From her firſt hearing the preaching, ſhe was diligent in the uſe of all the means of grace, whether private or public: and though the preaching was ſeldom near, ſhe attended at every poſſible opportunity.

She was conſtant at meeting her claſs; and thoſe who were moſt acquainted with her, being of the ſame family, obſerved that ſhe always expreſſed the ſtate of her ſoul, juſt as it was, and manifeſted ſuch a ſpirit of ſincerity in all her deportment, as convinced them that ſhe was an *Iſraelite indeed*, in whom was no guile.

Her ſtep-mother being rendered incapable of managing the affairs of the houſe through affliction, the care of a young family in a great meaſure devolved on her, which with the attendance needful for her helpleſs ſtep-mother, neceſſarily brought upon her conſiderable exercieſes and trials, to one of ſuch tender years; yet being inwardly ſtrengthened for the performance of theſe duties, ſhe manifeſted as much tenderneſs towards her, as if ſhe had been her own mother; (an example too rarely ſeen in ſuch caſes) and was enabled to go through her conſtantly trying circumſtances with unwearied patience. Although by theſe means ſhe was

deprived of providing for herſelf ſuch ſort of apparel, &c. as thoſe of her age uſually expect, and may perhaps innocently enjoy.

Having been tried and in ſome meaſure entangled in her affections, ſhe was ſenſible of a decline in her ſpiritual conſolations, but through the mercy of God, this laſted not long; for ſhe reſted not till ſhe had recovered all ſhe had loſt; ſo that ſhe was enabled to teſtify to a Chriſtian friend, while ſhe remained in health, "I find my heart looſe from every creature, "and all created good, and wholly fixed on God: "this is the deſire of my ſoul,

"O that I might walk with God,
"Jeſus, my companion be;
"Lead me to the bleſt abode,
"Through the fire, and thro' the ſea:
"Then I ſhall no more complain,
"Never at my lot repine,
"Welcome toil, or grief, or pain,
"All is well, if Chriſt is mine."

When the grace of God in ſo eminent a degree, takes place in the heart, how little does every thing we ſuffer for his ſake appear. How empty is *all* the world calls *good* and *great*, to a ſoul thus filled with divine love!

From the following remarkable circumſtances, it ſeems as if ſhe had ſome apprehenſions of the near approach of death. She began to be more abundantly diligent in the uſe of every means of grace, for ſome weeks before her laſt ſickneſs. It was alſo obſerved that though ſhe had not been accuſtomed to pray at the claſs-meeting, yet being now exceedingly fervent in ſpirit, one evening at claſs, ſhe broke out into earneſt prayer; ſhe appeared to enjoy much freedom, and great nearneſs to God, and was deeply affected with a ſenſe of the *evil of ſin*, and her own *weakneſs*, which occaſioned her crying to God in ſuch expreſſions as theſe, "O Lord! Rather let me *die*, than "live to offend, or ever ſin againſt thee!" Indeed the

the vehement importunity with which she uttered these petitions made her brethren suspect that something more than common would happen; for the power of God was unusually present.

Soon after (on the 14th of January, 1769) she sickened for the small-pox. One then asked her, how she felt her soul: she said, "My evidence is clear, and "life or death, the will of the Lord be done."

During her illness, she continued perfectly resigned to the will of God. The Thursday after sickening, she became blind, when one of the society coming in, and discerning the distemper to be dangerous, sat down and wept. As soon as she perceived it, she said, "*Dol-*"*ly!* What are you doing? Are you weeping for me? "Don't you know, that if God takes me away, it is "from much evil that is in the world? I have often "looked at your mother, and thought, O that I was "but as near glory as her: (she being about fourscore) "but now I think I am nearer glory than she is, and "shall be in possession of it before her!"

Such were the pious affections of this happy young woman! But how different are the desires of most of her age; These alas, are promising themselves *long life*, and saying *what shall we eat, and what shall we drink*, and especially *wherewithal shall we be cloathed?* Yet out of the mouth of babes and sucklings God can perfect praise. The loveliness of the Lord Jesus can so powerfully attract the heart from earthly things, even in the bloom of youth, as to make us long to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which will afford us greater happiness than all the enjoyments of this vain world.

When she was asked again how she found herself, she answered, "Glory is every moment open to my "soul: there is nothing between me and eternal glo-"ry, but a few moments more of light affliction."

At night she called for her father, and said to him, "Dear father, you have had many trials and diffi-"culties in the world, and you have many more before

" you ; but fear not, you are in the *way*, the *right* way
" continue in it, and God will bring you thro' all."

On Saturday the 21ſt, about Eleven at night, ſhe broke out in an extacy of joyful praiſe ; ſpeaking in the moſt delightful language for more than an hour together, concerning Jeſus and his kingdom. Some that were preſent on being aſked what ſhe then ſaid, anſwered, we heard words not poſſible for men to utter ; and indeed but little of the converſation could be retained by any of them, they were ſo overwhelmed with a ſenſe of the preſence of God.

Once ſhe was obſerved to ſpeak in the following manner, " There is never a fiend left now ; they are " all baniſhed ; Jeſus has conquered them all for me!" By which it ſeems, this was her triumph in the laſt combat ſhe had with Satan.

She then repeated and explained, in a moſt feeling and ſenſible manner, many paſſages of ſcripture, eſpecially Dan. vii. 9, 10. " I beheld till the thrones were caſt down, and the Ancient of days did ſit, whoſe garment was white as ſnow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool ; his throne was as the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery ſtream iſſued and came forth from before him ; thouſand thouſands miniſtered unto him, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand ſtood before him : the judgment was ſet, and the books were opened :" Adding in the end, " O lovely Jeſus! " Bleſſed Jeſus! Adorable Jeſus! Glory! Glory! " Glory! Glory! To God in the higheſt! On earth " peace ; good-will towards men." Thus Chriſt's coming in the clouds to judgment, was to her infinitely deſirable, and ſo abundantly was her ſoul raviſhed with the *proſpect*, that ſhe could not forbear rejoicing with joy unſpeakable and full of glory. However terrible his appearing will be to the *unprepared*, it will be *a day of gladneſs* to the *righteous*, yea of their eternal eſpouſals to Chriſt.

While in health, ſhe ſeemed at a loſs to conſent to the doom of the wicked, but now ſhe ſaid, " O

" how

" how willing is Chriſt to ſave all that come to him!
" But they who will not come ſhall be deſtroyed; and
" though I could not for a long time ſay *Amen* to the
" ſentence of *impenitent ſinners*, yet now I can, ſeeing
" how willing God is to ſave *all* who will accept of
" his offered mercy." Surely he deſireth not the death of a ſinner, and therefore hath given his well-beloved Son, *that* whoſoever *believeth on him ſhould not periſh*, though it is certain, that thoſe who believe not, ſhall be eternally miſerable.

She likewiſe repeated Revelations xiv. 1, 2, 3, taking particular notice of thoſe words, an hundred and forty four thouſand, in the firſt and third verſes: and ſaid, " A goodly company! And I ſhall be *one*, and
" all that have died in the Lord, and all the preachers
" whom I have loved, (mentioning ſome of them by
" name) and I ſhall ſee them there; and all the *Metho-*
" *diſts*, that are *ſuch indeed*; *they* ſhall be there." May we be *Iſraelites indeed*, who are ſo called, and not reſt in a name to live while we are dead.

She again cried out, " O precious Jeſus! My be-
" loved is mine, and I am his! He is the *faireſt* of ten
" thouſand, yea *altogether lovely*. * O what glory do
" I ſee! And all for *me!* How does my ſoul burn with
" love to Jeſus, who has provided it for me! I won-
" der, that *that* happineſs could have no higher title
" than heaven." How little can we conceive of what God has prepared for thoſe who love him, till *he* reveals it to us by his Spirit! And then the ſoul is tranſported, like *Sheba*'s queen at the ſight of *Solomon*'s glory, and can truly ſay of all they have heard of Jeſus and his glory, *the one half was not told me!*

On Monday the 23d, ſhe called her father, and ſaid, " I am going." He aſked *where?* She anſwered " to
" heaven: adding, I am glad I do not leave *you*, in
" your ſins, but that you are brought into the right
" way; only endure, and you will ſhortly follow *me!*

" Do

* *Cant.* v. 16. *Theſe were the words ſhe choſe for her funeral text.*

" Do not grieve for me; O reſign me." He cried, " I am a wretch, I cannot reſign you;" to which ſhe " anſwered, " *that* is nature, I was a wretch too, but " God has ſet me at liberty; do you pray to him, " and he will give you more grace." He complained " I cannot pray, do you pray for me." She ſaid, my " bowels yearn for you;" and then lay quiet a little, interceding for him and the family; after which ſhe broke out, " Lord haſten thy work; do more now in " my ſoul in a day, than thou waſt wont to do in many " days. She then repeated Rev. xxii. 1, and ſaid " well may they be called rivers, for I ſee fountains " upon fountains; O what rivers of pleaſure are there! " How ſhall I ſwim in thoſe *oceans* of *love* to all eter- " nity! I am overcome with love! Oh if I were looſe " from this affliction how would I ſing!" And calling on thoſe who were preſent to ſing, ſhe gave out

" No need of the ſun in that day,
" Which never is followed by night,
" Where Jeſus's beauties diſplay,
" A pure, and a permanent light:
" The Lamb is their light and their ſun,
" And lo! By reflection they ſhine,
" With Jeſus ineffably one,
" And bright in effulgence divine."

To her father ſhe ſaid, " You have many difficul- " ties in the world, and I will tell you what you muſt " do; give your hands to the world, and your heart " to God, and *he* will make a way for you."

She ſeemed to enjoy a happy foreſight of the proſ- perity of the work of God, when ſhe ſaid, " You may " look for glorious times to come; for the Lord " has a great work to do on earth, before the " church militant can join the church triumphant." To ſome of the ſociety who were preſent, ſhe ſaid, " God has given you the *means* of *grace*, in order to " bring you ſafe to glory; ſee that you do not ſlight

" or

" or neglect any of them; uſe them conſtantly, and
" look through them all to Jeſus."

Afterwards one aſked, how ſhe was? She anſwered, " Weak in body, but happy in ſoul; I long to be " gone to heaven." Being told, you muſt be reſigned, ſhe anſwered, " I am reſigned, but would rather " be with Jeſus."

Some who deſired to ſerve the Lord, but were not heartily in earneſt, came to ſee her. One of theſe, ſhe had invited ſome time before to the claſs-meeting; and he had almoſt promiſed to come, but neglected; ſhe ſaid to him, " I thought you would have been at " the meeting as you propoſed; O how was my ſoul " grieved that you did not come! Will you come the " next time? The *Methodiſt* way is the *right* way. It " was a happy turn that I was ever brought into it. " O how good have I found it to *remember my Creator* " *in the days of my youth!* Now I can ſay, though I " walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death, I " will fear no evil, for the Lord is with me, his rod " and ſtaff ſhall comfort me. She then encouraged " them heartily to join with the people of God, and " not to fear any reproach they might ſuffer on that account.——*Bleſſed is he that ſhall not be offended in me*, ſaith Jeſus. Lord grant we may never be aſhamed of thy cauſe, ſervants, or people, here, and then we need not fear thy diſowning us at that day.

When the diſorder was at the height, ſhe ſaid, " Some may think that I have a *heavy* affliction. *No*: " I have none that I can ſpare. Oh! it's a *happy* " affliction!"——While the ſoul thus enjoys Jeſus, it rejoices in tribulation, finding that *tribulation* worketh *patience*, and patience *experience*, and experience *hope*, even a hope *full of immortality*.

" Others, ſaid ſhe, may ſay of me, ſhe was once " *blooming*; how is ſhe *altered* now? But I was never " ſo *beautiful* in all my life; I am as the King's " daughter, all-glorious within: and my raiment is " of wrought gold."

Sure

Sure the Lord chaſtens only that we may be made partakers of his holineſs: and however it may be grievous for the preſent, yet every affliction yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs to thoſe who endure according to the will of God.

A little before her departure, being viſited by the wife of one of the leaders, ſhe aſked how her huſband did? Adding, "He has had many ſtruggles to help "me forward in the ways of the Lord; but now he "may rejoice in all his labours, for I am going ſafe "to glory, and hope to meet him there. O little "children! Love one another." She alſo adviſed her as ſhe had many children to take care what example ſhe ſet before them.

Afterwards one aſked whether ſhe thought her preſent ſickneſs would end in death; ſhe anſwered, "I "cannot tell; but the will of the Lord be done. "Only this I know, that neither life or death ſhall "ſeparate me from the love of Jeſus, who has redeemed me from the foundation of the world. If I die, "as ſoon as you ſee me depart, ſing *Happy ſoul, thy days* "*are ended*: and when you carry me to the grave, ſing "the ſame hymn. When you return, do not let your "hearts be filled with grief, but praiſe God, as I ſhall "be rejoicing with him in glory."

Thus ſhe triumphed over her laſt enemy, death, aſcribing glory to him who had given her the victory, and returned with ſinging to Zion, and everlaſting joy upon her head, before the expiration of her twentieth year; a dying witneſs of God's power to ſave even unto the *uttermoſt*, them that come unto him by Chriſt Jeſus.

By this, and ſuch like evidences of the power of inward religion, how ought our *faith* to be ſtrengthened, our *hope* confirmed, and our *zeal* quickened for God's glory, and the ſalvation of our own ſouls and the ſouls of others.

How much happier is it, for youth, of either ſex, ſo to live as thus to die, than to be employed in all the gaieties

gaieties and pleaſures this vain world affords! May it be the conſtant care and ſteady endeavour of all ſuch, to get and maintain that union with Jeſus, which alone can make life happy, and diſarm death of all his terrors. If this is indeed your deſire, that you may not be diſappointed in your expectations, be you found always waiting upon God, in every means he has appointed. Be willing to forego what the world falſely calls *pleaſure*, that you may *here experience* the foretaſte of bliſs, and may hereafter *fully enjoy* thoſe rivers of pleaſure, which flow from God's right-hand for evermore.

An HYMN,

ſung at the time of her departure.

1 HAPPY ſoul, thy days are ended,
All thy mourning days below;
Go by angel-guards attended,
To the ſight of Jeſus go.
Hallelujah, Amen.

2 Waiting to receive thy Spirit,
Lo the Saviour ſtands above,
Shews the purchaſe of his merit,
Reaches out the crown of love.

3 Struggle through thy lateſt paſſion,
To thy dear Redeemer's breaſt,
To his uttermoſt ſalvation,
To thine everlaſting reſt.

4 For the joy he ſets before thee
Bear a momentary pain;
Die, to live the life of glory,
Suffer with thy Lord to reign.

HYMN

HYMN, II.

1 O THOU God of my ſalvation,
My Redeemer from all ſin;
Mov'd by thydivine compaſſion.
Who haſt died my heart to win:
I will praiſe thee,
Where ſhall I, thy praiſe begin.

2 Tho' unſeen, I love the Saviour,
He hath brought ſalvation near,
Manifeſts his pard'ning favour,
And when Jeſus doth appear
Soul and body
Shall his glorious image bear.

3 While the angel choirs are crying
Glory to the great I AM,
I with them, will ſtill be vying,
Glory, glory to the Lamb.
O how precious
Is the ſound of Jeſu's name.

4. Now I ſee with joy and wonder,
Whence the gracious ſpring aroſe;
Angels minds are loſt to ponder
Dying love's myſterious cauſe;
But the bleſſing
Down to all, to me, it flows.

5 This has ſet me all on fire,
Strongly glows the flame of love;
Higher mounts my ſoul, and higher,
Struggles for its ſwift remove,
Then I'll praiſe thee,
In a nobler ſtrain above.

FINIS.